

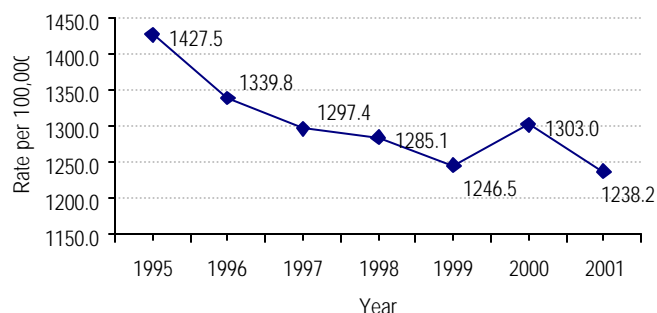
### What is the magnitude of the problem?

In 2001, heart disease was the leading cause of death for people age 65 and older in Arizona resulting in 8,555 deaths for this age group. That is almost one death every hour. One possible reason for the sharp increase in mortality rate for the year 2000 may be associated with the change in coding the disease (i.e. ICD-9 to ICD-10).

### What is the cost?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cardiovascular diseases cost the nation about \$300 billion in health cost expenditures and loss of productivity. In Arizona, there were a total of 54,115 hospitalizations due to diseases of the circulatory system for 2001. The maximum expenditure for all hospitalizations related to diseases of the circulatory system was approximately \$1.36 billion. An average of \$25,154 was spent per hospitalization with an average length of stay of five days. Of these hospitalizations, over half (52.5%) were related to hypertension, heart attack, and heart failure. Hospitalization data are from state hospitals only; federal facilities (Veterans Affairs and Indian Health Services) are not included.

Mortality Rate for Heart Disease among Older Persons (65 years and older), Arizona



Source: *Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics, Arizona, 2001*

### Who is at risk?

Individual lifestyle behaviors and choices that put people at increased risk for heart disease and cardiovascular diseases in general include the following:

- High blood pressure and high cholesterol
- Tobacco use and heavy drinking
- Physical inactivity
- Poor nutrition and obesity
- Diabetes

### What will decrease the risk?

Begin to invest in personal health today. Choosing a healthy lifestyle will prevent or lessen the chances of heart disease and improve the overall quality of a person's life. Good management of chronic heart disease and lifestyle behaviors are important. The following are ways to decrease the risk and/or manage heart disease.

- Yearly blood pressure and cholesterol screenings
- Smoking cessation
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Yearly flu shot and pneumococcal vaccine every five years
- Routine oral health exam every six months
- Reduced intake of saturated fat and salt
- At least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables
- At least thirty minutes of moderate physical activity every day

**There are resources available to learn more about healthy lifestyles, heart disease or programs to support and promote healthy living. Visit the Healthy Aging 2010 website at <http://www.hs.state.az.us/phs/healthyaging2010/index.htm>**